

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: CH, UR, US, KN, KS, VN, XJ
SUBJECT: KAPITSA ON BRZEZINSKI CHINA VISIT AND OTHER
TOPICS
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REF: (A) MOSCOW 8357, (B) MOSCOW 3846

SUMMARY: CHIEF SOVIET MFA FAR EAST DEPT KAPITSA:

-- REFERS TO BRZEZINSKI CHINA VISIT IN CONTEXT
OF MOVEMENT BY U.S. AND PRC TOWARD "SEMI" OR "QUASI-

ALLIANCE" DIRECTED AGAINST THE USSR;

-- CLAIMS BRZEZINSKI VISIT WAS MORE "OBVIOUSLY"
ANTI-SOVIET THAN KISSINGER'S FORMER VISITS;

-- HOLDS THAT SINO-US EFFORTS TO "PRESSURE"

--..

MOSCOW WILL NOT WORK BECAUSE SOVIET UNION CANNOT BE
PRESSURED AND BECAUSE CHINESE POWER IS AND WILL REMAIN
WEAK RELATIVE TO SOVIET POWER;

--SEES NO EARLY IMPROVEMENT IN SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS
AND TERMS IL'ICHEV BORDER TALKS IN PEKING "USELESS";

--DENIES THAT SOVIETS ARE INTERFERING IN AFRICA
AND CALLS ERITREA AN "INTERNAL MATTER" FOR ETHIOPIA TO
SOLVE;

--STATES CHINA IRKED BY STRONG SOVIET SUPPORT FOR
VIETNAM;

--CLAIMS THAT ANOTHER CONFLICT IN KOREAN PENINSULA
IS UNLIKELY. END SUMMARY.

1. MIT PROFESSOR WILLIAM GRIFFITH AND EMBOFF CALLED
ON CHIEF, SOVIET MFA FAR EAST DIVISION M.A. KAPITSA
ON JUNE 8 FOR ONE HOUR.

2. SINO-US-SOVIET RELATIONS: KAPITSA SEVERAL TIMES
REFERRED TO BRZEZINSKI VISIT TO PRC IN CONTEXT OF
MOVEMENT BY U.S. AND PRC TOWARD "SEMI" OR "QUASI
ALLIANCE" DIRECTED AGAINST THE USSR. HE CHARGED THAT
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BRZEZINSKI WAS TRYING TO PLAY THE "CHINA CARD" IN GOING
TO PEKING. BRZEZINSKI'S VISIT, HE ALLEGED, WAS MORE
OVERTLY GEARED TO ANTI-SOVIETISM THAN KISSINGER'S TRIPS
TO CHINA. PROFESSOR GRIFFITH DISAGREED THAT KISSINGER'S
AND BRZEZINSKI'S MOTIVES IN VISITING CHINA WERE ANY
DIFFERENT. KAPITSA RESPONDED THAT BRZEZINSKI MADE
OBJECTIVES OF HIS TRIP MORE "OBVIOUSLY" ANTI-SOVIET
THAN DID KISSINGER.

3. KAPITSA SAID THAT THE CHINESE CANNOT SIMULTANEOUSLY
PURUE BETTER RLEATIONS WITH THE WEST ON AN ANTI-SOVIET
BASIS WHILE SEEKING BETTER RELATIONS WITH MOSCOW. THIS
WOULD BE "INCONSISTENT". PROSPECTS ARE THEREFORE POOR
FOR AN IMPROVEMENT IN SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS IN THE SHORT
RUN. HOWEVER, THE EFFORTS BY THE WEST TO EXPLOIT THE
PRC'S PRESENT ANTI-SOVIET COURSE WILL NOT WORK FOR TWO
REASONS: FIRST, THE SOVIET UNION WILL NEVER YIELD TO
PRESSURE. SECONDLY, CHINA IS TOO WEAK. THE USSR WILL
BE STILL MORE POWERFUL THAN CHINA TWENTY YEARS HENCE,
EVEN FIFTY YEARS HENCE. THE PRC CANNOT THEREFORE
THREATEN THE USSR.

4. KAPITSA CONTINUED THAT MAO HAD ORIGINALLY ATTEMPTED TO
DIRECT THE USSR AGAINST THE U.S. MAO TRIED HARD TO GET TH

USSR TO AGREE TO EMPLOY NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN SUPPORT OF THE
PRC'S PLAN TO REGAIN TAIWAN IN THE LATE 1950S. KAPITSA
SAID HE WAS GROMYKO'S INTERPRETER WHEN THE LATTER SAT
IN ON CHINESE POLITBURO MEETINGS IN PEKING IN 1958 TO
DISCUSS THE TAIWAN STRAITS CRISIS. MAO PRESIDED,
CALLING ON THE USSR NOT TO SHIRK ITS RESPONSIBILITIES.
KAPITSA CLAIMED THAT MAO ASSERTED THAT WHEN THE US HAD
EXHAUSTED ITS NUCLEAR AMMUNITION IN A NUCLEAR WAR, THE
PRC WOULD STILL HAVE 400 MILLION PEOPLE TO CARRY ON THE
"SOCIALIST" CAUSE. ACCORDING TO KAPITSA, GROMYKO TURNED

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TO HIM AFTER MAO'S PRESENTATION AND ASKED IF MAO WAS
INSANE.

5. SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS: REVIEWING THE DETERIORATION
IN SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS, KAPITSA SAID THE SOVIET REFUSAL
TO USE ATOMIC WEAPONS TO SUPPORT CHINA IN THE TAIWAN

STRAITS CRISIS WAS AN OVERWHELMING AND INITIAL CAUSE FOR THE RIFT. HOWEVER, MAO BECAME INCREASINGLY DISGRUNTLED IN THE 1950S WHEN, DESPITE "THREE OR FOUR" REQUESTS, THE SOVIETS REFUSED TO "RETURN" MONGOLIA TO CHINA. THE
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EVENTUAL INTRODUCTION OF SOVIET TROOPS INTO MONGOLIA IN 1965-66 EXACERBATED THE WORSENING TREND IN SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS. THE SOVIET REFUSAL TO CONTINUE AIDING CHINA IN THE NUCLEAR AREA GREW OUT OF THE INITIATION OF SOVIET-US NEGOTIATIONS ON THE TEST BAN TREATY. THIS ALSO CONTRIBUTED TO THE DETERIORATION. CURRENTLY, THE INTERNAL POLITICAL AND FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVES OF CHINESE LEADERS RULES OUT AN EARLY IMPROVEMENT IN RELATIONS. THE IL'ICHEV PEKING BORDER TALKS ARE "USELESS" SINCE THE CHINESE DEMANDS ON 33.5 THOUSAND SQUARE KILOMETERS OF "DISPUTED" AREAS, NOT TO MENTION THE 1.5 MILLION SQUARE KILOMETERS PEKING ASSERTS THE SOVIETS SEIZED FROM CHINA UNDER THE "UNEQUAL TREATIES" MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE TO CONDUCT FRUITFUL NEGOTIATIONS. MOSCOW IS PREPARED TO LOOK AT THE MAPS AND SEE IF THE SOVIET UNION HAS EXTENDED TOO FAR AND IF SO, HOW FAR. KAPITSA CONTINUED THAT SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS WILL EVENTUALLY IMPROVE. CHINA WILL RECOGNIZE THAT IT CANNOT SIMULTANEOUSLY MEET ITS DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND PURSUE A MILITARY CONFRONTATION WITH THE SOVIET UNION DUE TO LACK OF ADEQUATE RESOURCES. CONTINUATION OF THE IMPROVING TREND IN SINO-US RELATIONS CAN ONLY GO SO FAR; THEN THE CHINESE MAY SEEK BETTER RELATIONS WITH MOSCOW. THE CHINESE MAY ALSO GROW FRUSTRATED AT THEIR INABILITY TO DRAW THE US AND USSR INTO A CONFLICT AND, ALSO FOR THIS REASON, ATTEMPT TO CREATE MORE BALANCE IN THEIR RELATIONS WITH THE TWO SUPERPOWERS.

6. AFRICA: KAPITSA SHRUGGED OFF GRIFFITH'S CHARGES OF SOVIET INTERFERENCE IN AFRICA. HE LINKED THE WEST'S ACCUSATIONS AGAINST THE USSR WITH A RUSSIAN PARABLE IN WHICH A WIFE WITHOUT EVIDENCE IS SUSPICIOUS THAT HER HUSBAND IS COMMITTING ADULTRY. KAPITSA SAID THAT THE
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SOVIET UNION AND CUBA ASSISTED ETHIOPIA IN REPELLING SOMALIA AGGRESSION. HOWEVER, ERITREA IS AN "INTERNAL MATTER" FOR ETHIOPIA TO DECIDE. GRIFFITH ASKED IF THIS MEANT THE SOVIET UNION AND ERITREA WOULD NOT BECOME INVOLVED IN ERITREA. KAPITSA AGAIN RESPONDED THAT

ERITREA IS AN "INTERNAL MATTER" FOR ETHIOPIA TO RESOLVE.

7. VIETNAM: FOLLOWING HIS STANDARD WARNINGS ABOUT AGGRESSIVE CHINESE DESIGNS ON SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST ASIA, KAPITSA SAID THAT PEKING IS ATTEMPTING TO RETARD VIETNAMESE DEVELOPMENT INTO A STRONGER REGIONAL POWER. GRIFFITH SAID THAT THE CHINESE MAY SEE VIETNAM AS HISTORICALLY WITHIN THEIR OWN SPHERE OF INFLUENCE. KAPITSA REMARKED THAT PEKING APPEARS TO BE MOSTLY IRKED BY THE STRONG SOVIET SUPPORT FOR VIETNAM. IN THIS REGARD, HE SAID THAT THE USSR HAS NO BASE AND WILL NOT HAVE ANY BASE IN VIETNAM. THERE IS NOT ONE SOVIET SOLDIER IN VIETNAM, HE ADDED, WHILE DENOUNCING HONG KONG BASED STORIES THAT THE USSR IS ESTABLISHING A MISSILE BASE IN VIETNAM.

8. KOREA: KAPITSA REPEATED WHAT HE HAD TOLD BRITISH OFFICIAL IN APRIL (REE A) HE DID NOT EXPECT A CONFLICT TO BREAK OUT IN THE KOREAN PENINSULA; THE USSR WOULD NOT SUPPORT THIS, NOR WOULD CHINA (ALTHOUGH HUA KUO-ENG SPOKE "ELOQUENTLY" ABOUT THE REUNIFICATION OF KOREA DURING HIS RECENT TRIP TO PYONGYANG) AND THE US DOES NOT WANT THE SOUTH TO REOPEN THE CONFLICT. KAPITSA, STATING THAT THE SOVIET UNION HAD HANDLED THE KAL INCIDENT "EFFECTUALLY", COMMENTED THAT THE ROK IS

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ANXIOUS TO ESTABLISH DIPLOMATIC TIES WITH THE USSR. HE SAID THAT MOSCOW FINDS THIS DIFFICULT. FOR EXAMPLE, EACH TIME THE SOVIET UNION IS FORCED TO ADMIT AN ROK DELEGATION INTO THE USSR TO PARTICIPATE IN AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, THE NORTH KOREANS BITTERLY PROTEST THE SOVIET VISA ISSUANCE. HENCE, SOVIET RELATIONS WITH PYONGYANG PREVENT MOSCOW FROM ESTABLISHING RELATIONS WITH THE ROK. KAPITSA ALSO SAID THAT THE NORTH KOREANS ARE PRIMARILY INTERESTED IN SELF-SUFFICIENCY AND WILL GUARD AGAINST BECOMING TOO CLOSELY LINKED TO EITHER
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THE USSR OR CHINA.

9. COMMENT: AS STATED REF B, WE FIND MUCH OF WHAT KAPITSA HAS TO SAY (PARTICULARLY ON SINO-SOVIET-US RELATIONS) TO BE SELF SERVING AND DISINGENUOUS. WITH THIS CAVEAT, WE NEVERTHELESS NOTE THAT COMING FROM A HIGH LEVEL, WELL INFORMED OFFICIAL SOVIET CHINA WATCHER, HIS PRESENTATION PROVIDES SOME INSIGHTS INTO THE THINKING OF SOVIET POLICY MAKERS ON MATTERS WITHIN HIS PURVIEW.
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